India's Venomous Snakes.

Altogether about 30,000 persons die each year in India from the bites of the various snakes I have mentioned, and it is no exaggeration to say that some 60 of Queen Victoria's subjects who were alive and well yesterday are today being burned or buried out there as a sequel to these accidents. The same will happen tomorrow and the next day, and at least one death from similar causes may be expected to occur every half hour between now and the time that the readers peruse what I have written. Mortality of this magnitude is a terrible thing, though the fact must be remembered that it is distributed among a population four times as large as that of the United States and thus passes to a great extent unnoticed.

The casualties are confined almost entirely to the poorer and more ignorant natives, who habitually go about with bare feet, for, although creatures like the hamadryas and the echis are occasionally spoiling for a fight, as a general rule a snake is no more anxious to be trodden upon than a man is to tread upon him. The consequence is that people who wear boots are hardly ever bitten. This is not so much because of the protection of the leather as on account of the noise made by a boot upon the ground, which warns the snake to get out of the way.—McClure's Magazine.

This Big Country of Ours.

"A man can't take a trip across this big country," said a reverend traveler, "without finding out, in more ways than one, something refreshing about the size of the land of the free. I spent a couple of the most delightful weeks in beautiful Denver and was quite taken with the breezy, cosmopolitan style at the restaurants there. It seemed to be just the thing for one stranger to engage in conversation with another, and I had many a pleasant, chatty time over the table.

"On the last day I spent in the high city, in talking with a bright looking resident who, following custom, took his meals at a restaurant, I naturally inquired, 'Do you come from the east?' 'Oh, yes,' he replied, 'I am an eastern man.'

"'From where do you come?' was my second natural question. 'From Topeka,' was the answer, given with calm assurance. Since then I have been wondering if I lived in the east, west, or in what part of the vast country I did live."—Philadelphia Call.

A Costly Position.

People do not realize that it costs a great deal of money for an officer of the army or navy to comply with the regulation as to dress. He must have the same amount of civilian clothes as an ordinary citizen to wear when he is off duty. Then he must have a fatigue uniform, which costs him never less than $45, and usually more, a dress uniform, which costs at least $100 and a special full dress, worth from $125 to $150, and an overcoat, costing from $50 to $60. He is required to have a number of caps and hats with plumes and that sort of thing, which cost $5 to $50. His epaulets cost him from $25 to $50, his sword and his belt from $50 to $65 and various other little fixings that are quite expensive. At the beginning of his service it usually costs an officer of the army or navy from $600 to $750 to get his outfit of clothing, and whenever a change is made in the regulations concerning uniforms of course the expense is renewed.—Exchange.

Theatrical Note.

The young man who thinks he knows a whole lot and wears a blue bow necktie with a shirt stud screwed into it for a scarfpin was talking to the clerk at the hotel he was patronizing.

"Anything good at the theater this week?" he inquired, with the air of a connoisseur.

"Yes. One of Frohman's New York companies is here."

"What piece are they playing?"

"They appear in repertory."

"What's that?" he asked, cocking his head over to be sure of what he was going to hear.

"They appear in repertory," repeated the clerk.

"Um—um—I never heard of that piece. Is it any good?"

The clerk assured him that it was a corker and then retired to a safe place where he might smile and enjoy himself.—Detroit Free Press.

Temper.

If you want to live to be 100, keep your temper. Never mind where you keep it, only don't let it see the light o' day, and the chances are longevity for you. Some of us do not consider age worth the price, for there is a good deal of the Greek in our compositions in spite of the mixture of races, and we Americans would rather die young than never have a tantrum or a "crise des nerfs," as they say in French. Righteous anger is a good thing. It generally purifies the atmosphere, even if it does take an hour or so off the allotted span.—Boston Herald.

Modern Modesty.

Employer — Want to marry my daughter, eh? And next, I suppose, you'll want your salary raised so that you can support her!

Employee—Oh, no, sir. I shall expect you to support us both.—Kate Field's Washington.

FIN DE SIECLE LOVE.

The Sweet Perfume of a Rose Prompted a Man to Propose.

When young Mr. Lawson asked young Miss Pettibone to marry him, they were both a little astonished. He had no such intention or even inclination when he went to make his party call. There had been no sentimental passages in their lengthy but perfectly commonplace friendship which demanded a proposal as a fitting climax. But Estelle looked remarkably well sitting before the fireplace, with a pathetic droop of her lips and a little weariness in her eyes. There was a red rose in the lace that fell from her neck, and its warm perfume filled the whole room.

Its odor and the sight of this new fascinatingly serious Estelle, the subdued lights in the room—everything about the place seemed to mount like wine to Dick's brain, and before he knew what he was saying he had told Estelle a tale of lifelong devotion and of a desire to marry her. Then, struck with sudden amazement at the sound of his own words, he waited for an answer.

Estelle, though she was not entirely unused to proposals, was unprepared for this one. Surprise caused her to color vividly, and to look at him with a curious, tremulous gaze. It occurred to him that these were the signs of love, and his blood froze in his veins. She was going to accept him.

But she did not. She said hesitatingly that it was a surprise to her. She had not dreamed—and she thanked him for the honor, but—but—would he give her a week to let her consider her own heart and desires? Of course Dick had no choice but to grant that reasonable request. He went out gravely with a sort of weight upon him. The cold night air, with no breath of roses in it, struck him with a chill. What on earth had he done? He went over to see his mentor, John Graham. It would not be the first scrape John had got him out of. John listened gravely and silently. When Dick had finished the story of his wooing, he remarked amiably:

"Dick, you're a fool."

Then he proceeded to puff away at his pipe again. Dick did not answer. By and by John removed his pipe and made his next statement.

"You might go back and tell her that the odor of Jacqueminot always affects you like too much champagne, and say that you don't love her and don't want to marry her. I think she'd free you. Or you might fast and pray until the end of the week. Perhaps Providence would be moved to induce her to refuse you. But I doubt it, Dick. You're such a captivating fellow, you know"——

Here he was interrupted by a few remarks concerning his mental capacity. Dick was beginning to look wretched. When he saw that, John rose suddenly.

"See here, Richard, my boy," he said, "don't look like that. I'll get you out of it. Go home and go to bed. Tomorrow afternoon you shall have your refusal. Go off now."

The next afternoon Dick received a note from Estelle. It was a very kind one—a little self reproachful that she had given him any hope, but with an air of joyousness in it too. "It is only right that I should tell you," the letter ran, "that I have been for some time engaged to your friend John Graham. We had a violent quarrel only that afternoon, and I never hoped to see him again. You see, in my loneliness and unhappiness, I was scarcely to blame for seizing at any chance of peace and affection, such as you offered me. But I know now how wrong and silly that view was. Forgive me for the pain I have caused you."

"Do you know, John," remarked Estelle to her fiance that evening, "I don't believe Dick Lawson was in love with me at all. Look at the great mass of jacks he sent me, and there was the dearest, most cordial note with them. Isn't it funny?"

"Very," said John laconically.—Chicago News.

That Wonderful Baby Boy!

The proud young mother had come to pay her first visit, accompanied by the infant heir and his nurse.

"I don't wish to appear in any way partial," she said, "but really for a child of 16 months I consider Algernon a marvel of intelligence. He understands every word that is said and joins in the conversation with a sagacity that almost alarms me at times. Speak to the lady, Algernon."

"Boo-boo," said Algernon.

"Listen to that!" cried the delighted mother. "He means 'How do you do?' Isn't it wonderful!"

"Now, Algernon, ask the lady to play for you. (He adores the piano.) Now, Algie, dear" (very coaxingly).

"Boo-boo!" said Algernon.

"He means 'music' by that. 'Boo-boo'—'mu-sic.' Isn't he too smart for anything? Now, love, tell the lady mamma's name."

"Boo-boo!" said Algernon.

"That's right. 'Boo-boo'—'Louise.' My name's Louise, you know. Oh, dear, I do hope he isn't too clever to live! Now, say by by to the lady, precious."

"Boo-boo!" said Algernon.

"'Boo-boo'—'by by.' Why, upon my word there's hardly any difference. Bless his little darling heart! Isn't he a wonder?"—Chicago Post.

FUTURE OF THE HORSE.

It Is Foretold That He Will Cease to Be a Beast of Burden.

There was a time when the wiry thoroughbred of English breeding and perhaps the Arabian barb were looked to as the surest means for improving the common stock of horseflesh. Consul General Judd reports from Austria-Hungary that the American trotter is now the favorite breed in use for improving the native blood. If Austria-Hungary cannot do better than to come to America for this purpose, it argues well for the superiority of the trotter.

As a beast of speed the distinctive trotter is an example of modern evolution. It is not many years since a speed of three minutes for a mile was reckoned good at a trotting gait. Now there is hardly a farmer's son in the country that does not own a colt that "can clip a mile in three minutes and not turn a hair," at least so the young man says. A speed of two minutes is not only possible, but probable in the immediate future, and the time may not be far off when the American horse can trot alongside the best Derby runner.

With the constant inroads of machinery on the field of the horse's usefulness a change is coming in the evolution of the animal. Already electricity supplants the old horse cars, and no one is sorry. One need have no sympathy for the overburdened fluid on a hard grade. An electric van for parcel delivery is working in London and is said to be cheaper than horse power. Promises have already been made by our inventors of electric plows, and feasible plans for freight and produce tramways across the country on roads hitherto traversed only by the aid of the horse or mule are suggested. The old fashioned horsepower for running incidental machinery is giving place to the "coming power."

The coming horse is to be less and less a beast of heavy burden. Many places there are where horses will continue to drag heavy loads of a necessity. The handsome draft horse is not yet entirely to be dispensed with. But pleasure driving will continue to give a motive for the improvement of the trotting horse. The bicycle takes the place of a few saddle horses perhaps, but the majority of cyclers care for a horse just as much as before the silent steed came into being. Many of them own a wheel who would not own a horse, but the wheel, even if built for two, is not so agreeable after all as holding the lines behind a glossy coated, lightly stepping horse. Electric motors for carriages are talked of, but they will be expensive for a long time yet, and until their proficiency is somewhat advanced from the present stage a man even with a balky horse would be less helpless in case of accident.

The noble, intelligent horse will not be lost sight of in the advance of civilization. Relief from the heavier duties will leave the more energy for the driving, of which every American citizen of means and leisure is fond. Whatever question there may be as to the morality or advantages of horse racing, the improvement of the trotter has made the animal more serviceable for the legitimate uses of man. If any one believes that the interest in the horse is to give place before the inroads of electricity, let him attend some great "horse convention" and note the attention paid the splendid specimens of endurance and intelligence there on exhibition.—Boston Journal.

Drinking From a Lady's Shoe.

In London a century ago it was no uncommon practice on the part of the "fast men" to drink bumpers to the health of a lady out of her shoe. The Earl of Cork relates an incident of this kind, and to carry the compliment still further he states that the shoe was ordered to be dressed and served up for supper. "The cook set himself seriously to work upon it. He pulled the upper part, which was of fine damask, into fine shreds and tossed it up into a ragout, minced the sole, cut the wooden heel into thin slices, fried them in batter and placed them round the dish for garnish. The company testified their affection for the lady by eating heartily of this exquisite impromptu." Within the last score of years, at a dinner of Irish squires, the health of a beautiful girl, whose feet were as pretty as her face, was drunk in champagne from one of her satin shoes, which an admirer of the lady had contrived to obtain possession of.—Newark News.

Another Kind.

It was about 10:30 p. m. and the young woman was talking to the man in the case.

"What I like in a man," she was saying, "is energy—one that has some go in him."

The young man glanced hastily at the clock, then at the door, then at the girl and got up.

"I beg your pardon," she said, blushing. "You may stay as long as you please. You are the first man that ever understood that statement properly."—Detroit Free Press.

The Convincing Argument.

Young Lady Shopper—This piece of dress goods suits me, except that I do not think the figure in it is pretty.

Subtle Salesman — Ah, but you surely will when it is made up and you have the dress on.—Arkansaw Traveler.

Excess of Genius In a Cattle Brand.

Old Dad Morrison, who used to have his headquarters on Buck creek, Briscoe county, in the Texas panhandle, found how unprofitable it is to be superior to one's associates. He suffered the discomforts and tasted the pains that wait on originality.

The brand which his triumphant fancy had achieved was a shackling, rudimentary human figure, such as infancy draws upon its slate at school, above the fond legend, "This is a man."

The boys welcomed and loved it. They christened it the Doll Baby brand, and its proprietor thereafter rejoiced in the sobriquet of Doll Baby Morrison.

It was a running brand, and old Dad was apt, in the storm and stress of sketching it with a redhot iron upon an unconsenting and recusant yearling, to draw the open circle which represented a head more like a horizontal oval. From this cranial irregularity of the miserable Doll Baby, the cowboys came to refer to the Morrison cattle as "Old Doll Baby's Flatheads."

When leisure and opportunity served, they would rope and tie down a Flathead or two and dispose themselves for an afternoon's artistic employment and recreation. The blank outline circle of a head would receive a set of rude features, wearing an expression of the utmost horror and despair. Wildly protesting limbs would be added to the simple parallelogram of a torso, the arms thrust frantically up, the legs on a dead run. And then, when the old man came upon his Flatheads so "improved," he would, in cowboy vernacular, just "beef!"—McClure's Magazine.

All She Knew.

Several years ago, when Professor John Philip Sousa, who will never be known by any other name among his admiring cronies than "Johnnie," lived over in east Washington, he was blessed with a little daughter whose mamma had brought her up with a strict and rigid observance of all the proprieties. One day little Miss Sousa approached her papa with evident mental perturbation. She seriously informed him that one of her little playmates had invited her to go upon an excursion on the following Sunday. "And, papa," she exclaimed, "when I told her it was a sin to do such a thing on Sunday, she began laughing and hooting at me. Now, papa, isn't it a sin to go on an excursion or anything like that on Sunday?"

The genial Johnnie was placed in a rather embarrassing situation, so he endeavored to slide out of it by mumbling something regarding impropriety and things of that sort and then proceeded to change the subject. His daughter, however, mistook his diplomacy for acquiescence in her opinion. "There," she said triumphantly, "I knew it was a sin." Then she added, with the utmost seriousness, "Just to think, papa, Annie is 11 years old and I am only 8, and still I know more about what vice is than she does." It was worth going miles to hear Johnnie Sousa laugh when he told that story.—Washington Star.

Married and Single Men.

When a woman is unmarried, she is called miss. When she is married, she is called Mrs. A man, whatever be his state, is Mr. Why should there not be some special designation for married men? "Master" has been suggested as an easy and not too great a change from Mr. for the designation of a married man. Thus Mr. Brown, after turning from the altar, would be Master Brown. This, however, is objected to on the ground that little boys are called master by servants and teachers, and the intimation would be that a man by marrying has entered his second childhood. By using the Latin dominus, as in the Portuguese, and call Mr. Brown Dom Brown the designation would be properly made. Another suggestion is that before a man marries the syllable "Ap" be attached to his name. Thus Mr. Ap Brown, son of Brown, would on marrying become Mr. Brown himself. Whether or not these suggestions be adopted it is plain that there is a necessity for some such distinctive appellation.—Atlanta Constitution.

Decorated Barns.

The Buffalo Courier believes that barns painted with advertisements deter many persons from buying neighboring property. "No man of good taste," it says, "cares to have a suburban home the view from which is bounded on all sides with reminders that he is mortal, and that immortality is only to be secured through the agency of Kilton's boluses, or Mudd's mustard plasters, or Skinem's salves, or Rattler's cough cure. The farmer may be indifferent whether he has neighbors or not, but he is not likely to be indifferent to the depreciation in the value of his farm, and that farm is always worth most which is in the most desirable neighborhood. Once prove to a farmer that painting his building with patent medicine advertisements cheapens his property, and he won't lose much time in getting rid of them."

Only One Blemish.

"Has that horse a pedigree?" asked the tourist.

"Nope," replied the honest farmer, "nothin but the heaves."—Exchange.